

BIOLOGICAL STAIN EVIDENCE

Promptly dry any wet biological stain evidence prior to packaging to prevent degradation. Biological evidence includes blood, semen, saliva and any other evidence containing biological fluids. Contact the laboratory, as necessary, for assistance with prioritization and number of items for submission. The laboratory may limit the number of items analyzed based on probative and forensic value.

A. Blood Stains:

1. Photograph any pertinent bloodstain patterns prior to collection and using a scale.
2. Collect the entire item if feasible.
3. If the item is too large to collect and is a porous material (e.g. carpet, upholstery, mattress, etc.), cut the stain out.
4. If the item is too large to collect and is a nonporous/smooth material (e.g. wall, door, linoleum, counter, etc.) use 1-2 barely moist swab(s). Concentrate the bloodstain onto the tip of the swab(s) and allow them to air dry.
5. Package item or swab(s) in paper – do not use plastic/non-breathable containers.
Note: multiple swabs used to collect a single stain are to be packaged together.
6. Store cool or frozen for best preservation. Note: smooth/nonporous items may need to be stored at room temperature if condensation will form upon thawing. Items needing latent print examination as well should be stored according to the latent guidelines.

B. Semen and Saliva Stains:

1. Photograph the evidence using a scale as necessary, prior to collection.
2. Collect the entire item if feasible.
3. If the item is too large to collect and is a porous material (e.g. carpet, upholstery, mattress, etc.), cut the stain out.
4. If the item is too large to collect and is a nonporous/smooth material (e.g. wall, door, linoleum, counter, etc.) use 1-2 barely moist swab(s). Concentrate the stain onto the tip of the swab(s) and allow them to air dry.
5. If the stain is wet upon arrival and the entire item is to be collected, mark the stain location prior to collection and drying.
6. Package item or swab(s) in paper – do not use plastic/non-breathable containers.
Note: multiple swabs used to collect a single stain are to be packaged together.
7. Store cool or frozen for best preservation. Note: smooth/nonporous items may need to be stored at room temperature if condensation will form upon thawing. Items needing latent print examination as well should be stored according to the latent guidelines.

C. Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits:

1. Kits are available from the Forensic Services laboratory and are provided to local hospitals upon request. Kits may also be used for collection at autopsy.
2. Coordinate with hospital staff to ensure all necessary samples have been collected according to case circumstances.
3. Ensure seals are intact and hospital staff has started the chain of custody.
4. Collect all necessary known reference samples for comparison purposes. An EDTA (purple-top) blood tube is included in the kit for use as a reference sample.

5. When collecting penile swabs from a suspect and/or male victim, use 1-3 moist swabs simultaneously. Include the penile shaft, scrotum and pubic area interfacing with the penis. Allow the swabs to air dry and package them together in paper. Kits may be used for collection of suspect samples but are not necessary when penile swabs are the only sample to be obtained.

Note: Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits contain liquid blood – refrigerate, but **DO NOT FREEZE**, as vials may break.

D. Known Reference Samples:

1. Blood collected in an EDTA (purple-top) blood tube or oral swabs may be used as a reference sample.
2. Collect oral swabs using 2 dry swabs simultaneously. Rub the swabs along the inside of the cheeks and gum line, ensuring that the entire swab comes into contact with the skin. Allow the swabs to air dry and package them together in a single cardboard swab box or other paper packaging.
3. Store cool or frozen. **DO NOT FREEZE** liquid blood tubes.

Note: oral swabs collected as part of a sexual assault exam **MAY NOT** be used as a reference sample since foreign DNA may be present on them.